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Ted O'Brien slams Labor's energy policy as a 'complete and utter disaster' amid possible delay of 2035 climate target reveal

Shadow minister for climate change and energy Ted O'Brien savaged Labor's renewables energy policy as a "complete and utter disaster" after reports emerged the government could delay revealing its 2035 emissions reductions target.



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The Albanese Labor government is on a "rampant renewables-only scheme", says Liberal Senator Hollie Hughes.

Shadow minister for climate change and energy Ted O'Brien has slammed Labor's "failed" energy plan after reports emerged the government could delay revealing its 2035 climate target.

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Prime Minister Anthony Albanese could push back announcing his 2035 emissions reduction target until after the February deadline, The Australian revealed on Thursday.

Speaking to Sky News Australia about the development, Mr O'Brien savaged Labor's energy and climate policy as a "complete and utter disaster".



Shadow minister for climate change and energy Ted O'Brien has savaged Labor's renewables energy policy as a "complete and utter disaster". Picture: NewsWire / Martin Ollman

"Over the last couple of weeks, we have found out that since Labor has come to office emissions haven't come down, they've actually gone up," he told host Peter Stefanovic.

"We found out too that we could have blackouts as soon as this summer. We are rapidly running out of energy.

"We've also found out that investment in renewables has stalled.

"Everything is turning very bad very quickly for Labor, and I think they're too scared to come out with anymore of their future forecasts which have been based on nothing but prophecy and lies, candidly."

The Coalition in June confirmed it would [not reveal a 2030 emissions target before the next election](#), which is due to be held no later than May 2025.

Opposition Leader Peter Dutton has further vowed to scrap Labor's 2035 climate target of reducing emissions by 43 per cent below 2005 levels should he be voted into office next year.

A previous report by the Climate Change Authority (CCA), which provides independent advice to the government, explored the possibility of a 2035 target between 65 and 75 per cent, but noted it would be "ambitious" to achieve.

Labor and the Coalition have continued to trade barbs over the targets in recent months, amid ongoing debate on whether renewables or nuclear power is the path forward for Australia as the country transitions to net zero carbon emissions by 2050.



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Mr O'Brien claimed the government does not "have a plan whatsoever" for 2050, citing Labor's broken election promise of delivering a \$275 reduction household power bills by 2030.

"Every single thing they promised has failed," he told Stefanovic.

"They're in government. They've got all the resources of government and they still are not prepared to come clean with their costings, with their plan.

"And now they're holding back on the emissions target not on behalf of a political party in the campaign, but the Australian government.

"They're breaching the very commitments that only a few months ago they were screaming about must be kept."

Asked by The Australian if the government would standby its February climate target deadline, a spokesperson for Climate Change and Energy Minister Chris Bowen did not rule out a possible delay.

"The Albanese government is working to bring down energy prices and emissions after a decade of delay, dysfunction and denial – but our progress is precarious," the statement read.

"Experts agree that the cheapest and fastest way to meet our targets and secure our energy needs as coal retires is to roll out renewables.

"That is exactly what the Albanese government is delivering."

The development comes as the CCA released its Sector Pathways Review on Thursday, which explored various "challenges and opportunities" as Australia tracks towards net zero.

The independent review identified the potential technology transition and emissions pathways across six sectors, including electricity and energy, transport, industry and waste, agriculture and land, resources and the built environment.



Nationals Senator Bridget McKenzie says the Coalition's nuclear plan is a longer-term solution to net zero.

The report highlighted the importance of utilising existing technologies, which includes solar and wind, to achieve the net zero carbon emissions goal

by the half century.

"Working to reduce emissions now, using existing technologies, is far more efficient and effective than waiting and hoping that bigger breakthroughs will do all the work," it read.

"Waiting for new, better, cheaper technologies is tantamount to choosing to continue to emit."

The report cited Australia's "plentiful solar and wind resources" which could allow the country to produce "large amounts of renewable energy relative to the size" of the population.

However, the prospect of nuclear power was "not included in the authority's list of technologies to support emissions reductions in the electricity and energy sector".

"Australia's lack of experience in building and managing nuclear power stations may reasonably lead to additional costs for a first-of-a-kind unit deployed in Australia," the report read.

The review cited the ongoing federal ban of nuclear power generation and referenced the [CSIRO's estimated multibillion-dollar costings and 15-20 year timeline](#) of building one plant.

However, the report noted nuclear should be "monitored as an option" in the scenario that significantly lower cost estimates emerge which would "necessitate a re-evaluation of this technology for deployment in Australia".